

Sample



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Three Marriages: lies I've lived by

Magdalen Bowyer

# An Excerpt

by  
Magdalen Bowyer

**This is a free sample of the book "Three Marriages" by Magdalen Bowyer  
To purchase the complete book, visit [here](#).**

When you start trying to figure out a man and a marriage, it's actually you avoiding the fact that it's simply not working ... for you. Your needs are not being met. But your focus shines toward him as you try to make him happy rather than getting honest with yourself. It's hard to look a man in the eye and tell him that whatever the two of you are doing together, ain't it for you.

Somewhere along the line you learned that you were always the one doing something wrong if things weren't working out. When you're not getting your needs met in the marriage, you simply start giving more. Until you get so tired and so depleted that you have to pull back into yourself or die. At that stage there is a death of sorts. A piece of you is dying. The question is what piece? Then to save your life, you start moving in another direction, discreetly. And here's a telling truth: *he doesn't even notice.*

Herstorically, no man has been willing to follow you, walk alongside you, fully partner with you since your first marriage. They've each tried to pull you down and away from yourself. It's painful. But you seem to have an extraordinarily high threshold for pain. What does this cost you? How does it force you to grow?

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You think what's needed is a real conversation.

So, you give it a go.

In a restaurant over lunch with the lovely Arab man who is your third husband. The man who rescued you from your crazy second marriage. The man who has been your lover and knight in shining armour for more than a decade. You retreat to the place inside yourself that truly trusts and admires all that he's been to you in your life. All the ways that he's extended himself to you and your family. You've been nothing less than true to him and his love for you. You have built a life on his promises. You expect that your loyalty and devotion will provide you with an abundant life. You expect you will be treated with fairness. That the lovely Arab man is a just man, a wise man, a loving man. His benevolence gives meaning to every decision you've made to bring you to this place alongside him as his wife. You expect he will fulfill his promise to shower you with all things good and beautiful. That he'll always love and protect you. That he'll never desert you and your sons. You expect that you've secured your place on Planet Earth and that all will be well. So all of this gives you the courage to speak truthfully on this day over this lunch with this lovely Arab man, your third husband.

Well, at least that is your intention. To speak truthfully. But very soon into the conversation you notice yourself being censored. You are censoring yourself. Or being cautious which eclipses the courage you had starting the dialogue. It's as though a part of you is watching you be all sweet and open and true while another part of you is holding something back, poking and prodding a bit because she senses that truth is no longer possible with the lovely Arab man. That something remains hidden. You can't quite put your finger on the pulse of untruth but it's as though you're stumbling around in a dark room full of furniture. You know the furniture is there even though you cannot see it so you walk with the clear intention to avoid hurting yourself. But this part of you is getting mighty tired of tip-toeing around truth and you are ready for a face-off. You know you are capable of a face-off. But you are also keenly aware of where you are and who you are in this desert

land. You believe the lovely Arab man is the source of your safety and security here and so there are also alarm bells ringing in your head. You want the truth but you also want to be safe.

You are testing yourself and you are testing him.

“Here’s what’s true,” you say to him, “I’ve been here with you a long time. I’ve tried living in your family home with you. It could’ve worked for me if it could’ve worked for you. I tried to make that house our home but you are stuck in some in-between place. You’ve kept me and my children away from your family. We’re married yet I remain hidden. So if the traditional way is not open to me then I’ve asked you to help me create my own way here. I’ve moved out of your family home. I’ve created a new home with my children and one that I’m dreaming you’ll one day step into as my present husband. But the truth is you only visit. You spend the night. Then you leave. The boys wonder why you are not with us and I wonder why you are not with us, too. I’ve been patient. I’ve watched you suffer through a hard divorce. I’ve been nothing less than loving and kind. And I know you will be angry when I say this but you are not treating us very well. And I cannot continue to live like this.”

Silence.

The truth hangs in the air like a dark cloud above your couple.

You can see how difficult it is for him to hear what you are saying but you are now on fire with truth and there is no going back to pretending that you are fine with the way you’ve been living.

“I am your wife yet you behave as though I am your mistress!”

Now you’ve crossed the invisible line of what’s acceptable to say out loud and what is not acceptable to say out loud. You know this is the hottest button to push and you know you’ll have unlocked the lovely Arab man’s wrath. Because he himself cannot bear to think that he is treating you like a mistress. You are too kind

and sweet and patient and loving which makes it nearly impossible for him to face his own shadow. That he has parts of himself that are less than kind and honourable is just something he is not willing to see.

Then you do something that you've never done in all the years of loving the lovely Arab man. You stand up.

"I am so done with all of this," you say.

Then you walk out of the restaurant leaving him dumbfounded at the table. You know you've crossed another line now. And your legs begin to quiver. You feel light-headed. A bit buoyant. You are rising up to meet yourself where your dignity lives. There is a different quality to the air where you are headed, and your body feels a deep relief, even a light-heartedness. It feels so good to just walk away.

You hail a cab. And just as you're opening the door to get into the car, you feel him behind you.

"Please don't leave. Come with me. Come with me, now," he says.

You hesitate momentarily. You turn to meet his gaze. He looks sad and tired. You decide to turn toward him this one last time.

You close the car door and wave the driver on. Then you walk with the lovely Arab man to his car. He opens the passenger door for you and you get in. He gets in the driver's seat, starts the car and drives out of the parking lot. And you think to yourself that the silence is no longer acceptable. You tell the lovely Arab man that the two of you must keep talking, that there are things to say out loud.

Then he says something that reignites the fire burning in your soul.

He says he wants you to return to Canada. To leave. To go home.

You tell him to pull the car over. That he best stop driving. So he pulls into the parking lot of the nearest shopping mall. When the car comes to a halt, you start to talk.

"You want me to go home to Canada? For how long?"

“I want you to leave here. Take your sons to Canada and make a life without me,” he says.

Your world stops spinning. There’s a ringing in your ears. Of all the places you’ve been with the lovely Arab man, you never for one moment dreamt that he’d have you repeat the very nightmare you were living when he swooped into your life to save you. He’s sending you home.

Or is he?

Because your world has stopped spinning and because your ears are ringing you are forced into your interior where deep silence fills every fibre of your being. And suddenly you know that he’s using your past to trigger your present in his attempt to manipulate you into obedience. In a split second you see the truth. It blinds you. You no longer have access to what you’ve been telling yourself all these years. All that you’d built this reality on dissolves in an instant. You are emptied out. Gutted.

Then a voice rises from inside of you so strong and clear that you have no choice but to be carried along on its vibration through the conversation that follows.

“And what of your son?” you ask.

“He’ll be better off without me. Take him to your home. Live as though I have died.”

You think you might just implode.

“As though you have died?!”

Rage rises from within you, takes you over and speaks.

“What kind of bullshit is this that you are saying? You begged me to bring him into this world! You promised to never leave us, to always take care of us. You promised I’d never repeat having to raise a son on my own. I trusted you and I made decisions based on your promises. And now you think you can just send us

away? What foolishness is this? I take this boy and I'm supposed to live as though you are dead yet every day I'll be face-to-face with your image in him, every day I'll hear you in his voice, every day I'll see you in his movements. Why would you torture me so? Why? What has changed in you that you are no longer willing to be the man you promised you would be?"

The lovely Arab man is shamed into silence. He has never witnessed you like this before. And never have you felt so right and so strong and so clear in his presence. But even though it sounds like you are making a case for staying, there's a part of you that has glimpsed a truth that will demand you leave. There's no going back from this awareness. Another veil has lifted.

And both of you know it in your hearts.

But only one of you will have the courage it takes to make the break. The kind of courage that trumps love yet is in sacred service to Love.

The lovely Arab man leaves you sitting in the car while he goes into the shopping mall. With him absent, you regain your grounded breath and you sense that something significant has happened. You don't move. The stillness comforts you. You open the car window to the soft breeze and sweet sunshine that is characteristic of the winter months in the Arabian Peninsula. The tension in your body melts away and you talk yourself into staying present for whatever wants to happen next.

But what happens next is so painful for you to remember that you don't want to write about it here.

It's embarrassing.

It reveals a trait in the lovely Arab man that you just don't want to look at. You are much more attuned to his soul than to his personality. So it is shocking when he succumbs to his lesser self yet he is merely human, isn't he? What does this response of yours say about you?

That you have changed.

You arrived in this desert land fragmented. The pieces of your broken heart have been messengers and magnets sending out unconscious shadowy fragments to draw in the people and the experiences to help you wake up.

Waking up now is out-of-this-world pain-full because you are faced with the chaos you've created through your un-clear choices. How are you ever going to get back to wholeness?

The lovely Arab man comes back to the car, opens the door and sits next to you. He places a small box in the palm of your hand. You frown and meet his gaze.

“What is this?”

“It's for you.”

You open the box to find an exquisite diamond pendant on a gold chain.

Another veil lifts.

He thinks this makes it all okay. He thinks this is the appropriate response to the dialogue you've just shared. He thinks this is what is required of him in order to keep you near. You feel sick. But you don't let him see that. Instead you smile warmly, close the box and say thank you.

Things will never be the same from this moment forward.

He knows it, too, but is unwilling to face it. He once said to you that *a drowning man has no fear of getting his pants wet* in reference to making sense of the craziness that your second husband was generating for himself and for you. You wonder now if the lovely Arab man knows his own fear. Because you've actually glimpsed it in this exchange between you. He fears that you will, in fact, do the thing he has demanded you do – leave.

And it is the one thing that you've promised him you'd never do because you can't bear the thought of taking his son away from him nor do you imagine you



have any power to do so. Yet you cannot help but feel a gateway has opened on this warm winter afternoon. An initiation. Something invisible has been made visible.

How will you process the deep disappointment of not being able to fulfill your own expectations and of not having your expectations met?

You don't know this now but you will. All expectations are a projection of your lesser self and an act of fear. Your expectations of others work to shield you from having to surrender and trust the Divine thrust of your own life. The expectations that you have projected onto the lovely Arab man are your fragments lost and looking for wholeness. They are a reflection of an ego spirituality. You fail to trust the Divine in yourself so you project your fear onto him and trust what you see to be the Divine in him. And then you tell yourself that you are trusting the Divine Plan for your life. Your proof? You make fearless decisions. That is, you make decisions that ignore your own fears. You don't understand that the fear in you is actually a friendly signal telling you to listen to your own needs. It's your body's response to wrong choices. You try to talk yourself into things that you really don't want to do. You never really wanted to leave Vancouver Island. You never really wanted to move into the lovely Arab man's family home. You never really wanted to marry the man. But the cultural buzz where you come from in the Western world is about feeling the fear and doing it anyway so you translate that to mean not trusting the big feelings that your body emits in order to guide you along your way. You have this incredibly sensitive intuitive system and you haven't been taught how to navigate its wisdom. But you'll learn. In fact, you are learning through all of this hard experience just what it costs you to ignore your interior signals.

There will be years of meditation and contemplation and yoga and affirmative prayer and cognitive self-care and sacred service to teach you precisely what your ego looks like. This ego of yours, this little self, is a skilled trickster.

Your soul is a strong, Prairie Wise Woman. When your first husband died, you became untethered from Her. This story you tell now is her healing in progress.

You and you alone created the chaos in your life through the unclarity of your own choices.

It's that simple.

And every choice generated a consequence. And consequences eventually come into balance.

You know now that you're already who you need to be. You are already you. There are no big decisions to be made. None. The thing you notice today is that your soul is the part of you that you've always felt at home with. It's been here all along. And it's your ego that drove you into places, both internal and external, where you didn't really want to go. It was your ego telling you that it wasn't enough to just be content and easy and free. It was your ego that had you choose the option that made you uneasy. You must never forget this about yourself.

Know thyself and you know the Universe.

Your soul is easy and natural. Your ego generates chaos and problems.

You're learning to own your own power by connecting to your own Divinity. And your Grace has been your refusal to be obedient to a man. It has been both the ruination and divination in your life because it has been the path through which you've discovered your dharma – your learning agenda.

Your last few months in the Arabian Peninsula are embodied in the wise Arab proverb that says to *Trust Allah but tie your camels!*

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You are sitting down for dinner with your sons. And suddenly you feel light-headed, dizzy. Your arms and hands so weak that you cannot pick up your plate. You feel as

though blood is draining from your body, down through your legs and out the soles of your feet. You think you must be hungry. Your blood sugar must be low, you reason. You break out into a cold sweat. Sit down and eat, you tell yourself. Just eat and you'll feel better. From the haze of your thoughts, you look at your eldest son sitting across the table from you. You tell him that if you should pass out that he must call Sabine and then Ibrahim because they'll know what to do. He looks puzzled and he doesn't understand the urgency in your voice. You feel as though he is a thousand miles away from you and that you must safeguard him should you leave. It causes you such intense pain to imagine you leaving these boys sitting at this table like this. That they'll wonder what happened to their mother and they won't have your guidance or protection or love. It rips your heart out to think of being separated from them and yet you are slipping away. Right here. Right now. You can feel yourself slipping out of your body. There's spaghetti on the table. You reach for some, put it on your plate and try to eat it quickly thinking it's just food that you need to bring you back to your senses. Even though the food is in your mouth you cannot taste it. You are consumed by the fear of leaving your children and not having anyone to care for them. The fear puffs you up like a helium balloon. It takes your voice. You cannot speak. Your head filled with intense, searing pain. *I don't want to die here ... I cannot die here* are the words rushing through your awareness. The pain of not being able to reach your sons even though you are sitting there before them is so excruciating that you are blinded into oblivion. All of this is happening inside of you and they are eating their dinner as though nothing is happening. You excuse yourself from the table trying hard to not alarm them. You say you just need to do something in your studio and will return shortly. Some part of you watching as you stumble down the hall into your studio. You close the door behind you and sink softly into your recliner chair. Closing your eyes, you pray this will all pass. You pray that you will live. The pain of not being able to reach

your children from this cloud of collapse is too much to bear. You feel heavy. Exhausted. You surrender to the sensation now. It takes you over. You drift into spacious space. There is relief here. You are alone. You are dying to the world as you've known it. You are letting go. There is nothing left. It's over. Gone. Done. Goodbye.

But it's not over because you do wake up. It's only been moments but it feels like forever.

And you know with every fibre of your being that if you do not leave this country you will become very ill and you will die here. You have seen clearly how this all ends. You know where you are headed now and there is not another day for you to delude yourself to thinking anything is otherwise. Your death will impact your sons profoundly. Their lives will be torn apart.

In your deep vision you see your eldest son returning to Canada to study and be with your family. Your youngest son will be privy to his father's life in ways you have never been. He will be "arabized" and taken into a life where his brother will not be welcome. Your children will not grow together as brothers. They will be estranged from each other. You will die in a country where you are considered to be a foreigner and your sons will be ripped apart. It will all be very sad. They'll say you never recovered from the death of your first husband. They'll say you were lost to yourself. And they'll be right. And your sons will be abandoned to live like orphans.

This is not the life you intended for yourself. Your dreams slipping away into blackness.

You are shocked by this deep knowing yet it brings you ease to finally see the truth of what you are choosing. This vision of the life path you have chosen has radiated from deep within you as a warning. You want out. You must get out. It will

not be easy, you know this. But you also know that if you want to save your sons' lives and reclaim your own then you need to get out of this place.

A prayer emanates from your consciousness. It becomes your mantra just as steady as your breath. *Goddess-God, let me see all there is to see. Show me the way home.*

For days after you suffer with intense headaches. Your eyes are burning tired. You can no longer focus correctly. You keep closing your eyes for relief. Within a week, you have seen an ophthalmologist and been prescribed glasses. He wonders why you haven't had to wear glasses before now because you have a stigma in your right eye. He says you must be adaptable.

You are no longer willing to adapt yourself to everyone else's version of who you should be.

You are hungry for clarity and truth.

Once you've seen the truth of things, once you've awakened to what is really unfolding, you're stronger than you've ever known yourself to be. You will never again go back to living in the foggy haze of delusion.

You are in danger of losing your life and losing your children. This and this alone is what becomes your driving force now.

You recall walking the city streets with your mother in search of a second wedding dress and all the while feeling a sense of dread. Yet you ignored the feeling. You told yourself it was the next thing you had to do even though you really wanted something else. You really wanted to just sit comfortably in the home you had created for yourself and your son, to accept the funding from the provincial government which would allow you to study, to get your degree, to build your life's work. But instead you listened to the voice in your head telling you that you could do none of those things without a man, a husband, a protector. It made you angry to succumb to it but you did nonetheless. What would it have looked like to heed your own intuition rather than undermine it?

You also recall telling your mother and father that you were leaving to live in a country thousands of miles away from all you've ever known to be home. You remember your second husband's sister saying that you were giving up a lot to move and you remember thinking how nice it was to have her acknowledge it out loud. Your mother's tears at the time annoyed you. Didn't she realize you had to make a new life for yourself? Didn't she understand that you were being brave? Being a mother yourself, you now wonder how you could have been so insensitive to her overwhelming feelings of loss. You were taking her only grandson 10,000 miles away ... *I want her to be excited for me, me, me* you said to yourself ... the me always looking for the life she thinks is hers. You were determined to not be your mother, to not need the things you thought were yours to build like family and stability and belonging. Yet the truth was you had already made a good start at generating those very things for yourself and your son.

And you walked away from it all.

Because you convinced yourself that you wanted something *different*. Trouble was that you had no idea what that was and you were unhinging yourself in hopes that somebody somewhere would give you exactly what you were looking for. You didn't realize yet that your life is a grand adventure and you have everything you will ever need inside of you. And that it's okay to not know exactly how it's all going to unfold. In fact, you can *never* know exactly how it's to be because you are the creator of your own experience. Your inner sensing was correct – you had an adventure to live. But your self-doubt and belief that what you required would come from somebody else was misguided. You let that misguided belief pull you from the path that felt right for you because you told yourself you didn't have enough and you wouldn't have enough and you needed to get more so you could come back to this path someday to do all the things that you actually wanted to do like make a home for yourself, be a good mother, study, read and write. You'd be

able to finally do all that when you had enough and then you'd be happy and settled and free. Until then you'd need to pay a price. You'd need to leave home, travel to a country that you had no interest in seeing with a man who seemed to love you enough and who certainly seemed to need you for his own happiness. That would surely be a "real" adventure much more valuable than you staying where you stood. Together you'd be stronger than apart. You could work and earn and save and come home to Canada to build the life you really wanted. You convinced yourself that the fear you felt about leaving was just fear and you needed to ignore it and go anyway. Rather than listening to your intuition, you lied to yourself which set in motion a corruption of your own power. You chose to not heed your own interior signals. You chose to not know that the so-called fear was actually a clear warning that you were about to step into territory that would cause you distress and distortion. This is your self-endangering innocence. The corruption of your intuition that brings you to this crossroads of choosing to live or to die, to be a mother to your sons or to abandon them.

We come to a crossroads through the chaos we create based on the dis-clarity of our choices when it's time to live more consciously.

*It's time to live more consciously!*



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